

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

**IN THE TITLE:**

Please delete the present title in its entirety and replace it with --METHOD FOR INHIBITING THE DEGRADATION OF BRAIN NATRIURETIC PEPTIDES IN A SPECIMEN COMPRISING THE USE OF CONTAINERS MADE OF OR COATED WITH SILICONE OR PLASTICS--.

**IN THE ABSTRACT:**

Please replace the Abstract with the rewritten Abstract attached hereto on a separate sheet of paper.